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O 230933Z MAY 06  
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8074  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0681  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0076  
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 0198  
RUEHHI/AMEMBASSY HANOI 1958  
RUEHKL/AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR 2403  
RUEHKS/AMEMBASSY MINSK 0013  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 7316  
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 0139  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0761  
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA J5 SEOUL KOR  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA J2 SEOUL KOR  
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA SCJS SEOUL KOR

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SUBJECT: ROK DECLINES CHAVEZ VISIT

Classified By: POL M/C Joseph Y. Yun. Reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

¶1. (C) On May 23, MOFAT South America Division Director Park Dong-won informed Poloffs that the ROKG had declined Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's request to visit South Korea on July 16. Sensitive to USG concerns, the ROKG refused the visit in consideration of the U.S.-Korean alliance. Park also noted Chavez's personal attack on President Bush and Venezuela's intervention in Latin American countries. Asked what reason ROKG gave to Venezuela for declining, Park said the ROKG explained that its diplomatic agenda this year was full.

¶2. (C) Park said the ROK Embassy in Caracas had reported that Chavez has asked to travel to China, North Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, Russia, Belarus, Iran, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. In North Korea, Chavez reportedly intends to discuss opening an Embassy in Pyongyang and swapping Venezuelan oil for North Korean weapons.  
VERSHBOW